

photo by AME1 John Brazil

by AME1 John Brazil

There I was, finishing a good flight. I got plenty of training signed off and was feeling good about my accomplishments. I was ready to leave early so I could make an off base appointment when I realized my car keys weren't where I usually left them. I tried to remember where they could be.

I started backtracking where I had been. The routine was the same every day. I got to work and checked the flight schedule and brief time. I then went to maintenance control to read the ADB (before my crew chief) and get some of the signoffs I needed. The first change in routine occurred while I was reading the ADB. The maintenance control chief told me that, because of the busy flight schedule, my shop was short on bodies and didn't have any representatives to attend the maintenance meeting. I volunteered to go since I still had plenty of time left before my brief.


The flight went better than planned. Crew coordination went very well, and the crew chief couldn't stump me with a single question during the flight. I was feeling good about the flight and was beginning to get the hang of my new job. Just when I thought everything was going so well, I needed my keys.

My keys... I thought about what anyone else might have done in this situation. I told my supervisor, QA, and maintenance control. I backtracked to every place I'd been. Maintenance recalled the aircraft; I was right there in



QA when the aircraft taxied in. Sure enough, my keys were in the aircraft, right where my flight bag had been. At first I was extremely relieved to have found my keys, but then I started thinking about how this all happened, and more importantly, how it could have been prevented.

I was fresh out of a safety stand-down on Friday, and by Monday I had already forgotten some important lessons. Think about it: If my keys had fallen into the flight-control closet, I might not be here to tell this story! Or even worse, I might have been writing a story about how I was responsible for the loss of fellow squadronmates.

Will you be the one to write the next story? 

AME1 Brazil is a SAR crewman with HC-8.